

NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST (NPL)

Proposed Site

September 2011

EIGHTEENMILE CREEK | Niagara County, New York

Site Location:

The Eighteenmile Creek site is located in Niagara County, New York, on the south side of Lake Ontario. The watershed includes the two main tributaries, the East Branch and the Gulf, and minor tributaries. Much of the flow in the main branch of Eighteenmile Creek comes from water diverted from the New York State Barge Canal (NYSBC). The creek flows north for approximately 15 miles and discharges into Lake Ontario in Olcott, New York.

Site History:

Eighteenmile Creek has a long history of industrial use dating back to the 19th century. In Lockport, New York, where the creek originates, four industrial or former industrial facilities (i.e., Flintkote Plant; United Paperboard Company; Upson Park; and White Transportation property), as well as the NYSBC, have been investigated. The area encompassing these properties and the associated reach of Eighteenmile Creek (i.e., from NYSBC downstream past the Flintkote Plant) is referred to as the Eighteenmile Creek Corridor. There are several other industrial facilities and inactive hazardous waste sites located along or in the vicinity of Eighteenmile Creek. Investigations have confirmed the presence of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and other contaminants throughout most of Eighteenmile Creek but specific sources of contamination have not been definitively identified. The Burt and Newfane Dams, both located on Eighteenmile Creek downstream of the Eighteenmile Creek Corridor, may serve as areas within the creek where contaminated sediments accumulate.

Site Contamination/Contaminants:

Sampling indicates that Eighteenmile Creek sediments are contaminated with a variety of pollutants, including the metals mercury, lead, zinc and copper; pesticide/insecticides; PCBs; and dioxins and furans. PCBs are the primary contaminants in sediment samples collected from the creek. Although the highest PCB concentrations have been reported within the Eighteenmile Creek Corridor, sampling data indicate that the sediment contamination extends approximately 12.71 miles downstream, just south of Burt Dam.

Potential Impacts on Surrounding Community/Environment:

The land within the Eighteenmile Creek watershed consists primarily of croplands and orchards, with residential, commercial and industrial areas located around Lockport, Newfane, and Olcott Harbor. There are several wetlands located along the contaminated portion of the creek, and evidence of fishing has been reported in the Eighteenmile Creek Corridor and other portions of the creek. Fisherman's Park, a public fishing area located within Eighteenmile Creek just downstream of Burt Dam, is a major fishing destination where several species of fish are caught and consumed. The reach of Eighteenmile Creek between Burt Dam and Lake Ontario is classified as an Area of Concern by the EPA Great Lakes National Program Office due to its natural resources value within the Lake Ontario watershed.

Response Activities (to date):

Eighteenmile Creek and surrounding properties have been the focus of numerous investigations by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and EPA since the late 1980s. NYSDEC has identified six Operable Units within the Eighteenmile Creek watershed and has produced two Records of Decision (ROD), but remedial actions have not been implemented.

Need for NPL Listing:

Other federal and state cleanup programs were evaluated but are not viable at this time. EPA received a letter of support for placing this site on the NPL from the State of New York.

[The description of the site (release) is based on information available at the time the site was evaluated with the HRS. The description may change as additional information is gathered on the sources and extent of contamination.]